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SIPDIS

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STATE FOR G; CA/OCS/ACS/EAP; EAP/EX; EAP/BCLTV; EAP/EP; INR;
OES/STC (PBATES); OES/IHA (DSINGER AND NCOMELLA)
BANGKOK FOR RMO, CDC, USAID/RDM/A (MFRIEDMAN)
USDA FOR FAS/PASS TO APHIS
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR OSD/ISA/AP (LSTERN)
USAID FOR ANE AND GH (DCAROLL, SCLEMENTS AND PCHAPLIN)
STATE PASS USTR (ELENA BRYAN)
STATE ALSO PASS HHS/OGHA (EELVANDER)
ROME FOR FAO

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: VIETNAM: AVIAN INFLUENZA WEEKLY REPORT FOR OCTOBER
27, 2005

REF: A) Hanoi 2655 and previous

[1](#)1. (U) Summary. There have been no new cases of human Avian Influenza (AI) reported since Mission Vietnam's last weekly update on October 20 (reftel). The Government of Vietnam (GVN) continues its poultry vaccination program and the National Institute for Hygiene and Epidemiology (NIHE) will hold a 2-day planning workshop for implementation of the HHS/CDC Cooperative Agreement to enhance their capabilities as a National Influenza Center. The Australian Government will provide an additional AUD \$3 million (\$2.26 million) to Vietnam to fight against a possible bird flu epidemic and the Embassy continues to plan for an AI pandemic. End Summary.

NO NEW HUMAN CASES

[1](#)2. (U) There have been no new human AI cases since August [1](#)29.

ANIMAL HEALTH

[1](#)3. (U) Recent discussion with Vietnamese animal health officials reveal that although the goal remains nationwide vaccination of all poultry, officials are prioritizing to increase the probability of success even if nationwide targets are not reached. Officials are first vaccinating in areas that have been prone to past outbreaks and are also working to first assure that duck populations are vaccinated. The ducks are most important because they are asymptomatic carriers that can spread the disease effectively whereas AI kills most chickens. In fact, some international experts suggest that a program that only vaccinates ducks could be successful.

U.S. - VIETNAM AI COORDINATION

[1](#)4. (U) NIHE is holding a 2-day planning workshop on October 27-28 for implementation of the HHS/CDC Cooperative Agreement to enhance their capabilities as a National Influenza Center. Leaders and key staff from partner institutions have been invited, including the Directors of NIHE, Pasteur Institutes of HCMC, Nha Trang, and Central Highlands; National Institute for Clinical Research and Tropical Medicine; National Pediatric Hospital in Hanoi; Pediatric Hospital #1; Hospital for Tropical Diseases in Ho Chi Minh City; Khanh Hoa General Hospital in Nha Trang; Dak Lak General Hospital; and Kien Xuong District Health Center, Thai Binh Province. Three HHS/CDC scientists will participate in the program demonstrating laboratory techniques and data collection procedures.

[1](#)5. (U) The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) held an AI coordination meeting in Bangkok on October 19-20 to finalize the country plans for emergency AI activities. According to USAID, the funds have been transferred and FAO is completing a budget for disaster preparedness planning.

[1](#)6. (U) The Academy for Educational Development (AED) was in Vietnam this week to develop an AI public awareness campaign. AED specializes in behavior change and social marketing with 1500 staff in 50 offices worldwide and was awarded \$2 million to conduct AI health communication interventions. Letters of Agreement between AED and each FAO country office are being drafted to define the working relationships between the Communications Advisors and FAO staff.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY EFFORTS

17. (U) The Australian Government will provide an additional AUD \$3 million (\$2.26 million) to Vietnam to fight against a possible bird flu epidemic. The Australian Agency for International Development will help the country to enhance the capability of managing public health emergencies with a focus on bird flu. One third of the assistance will be delivered through a program jointly conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO), FAO and the UN Development Program (UNDP), in partnership with the Vietnamese National Steering Committee for Avian Influenza Control.

PRESS REPORTS ON AI

18. (U) In response to increasing threats of a bird flu outbreak, press reports indicate the GVN plans to ban the raising and trade of live fowls in cities' inner areas nationwide and banning the sales of popular dishes made from poultry's fresh blood. The National Anti-Bird Flu Steering Committee is also drafting a regulation on the breeding, trade and slaughtering fowls.

19. (U) Local press also reported on October 27 that three Vietnamese pharmaceutical companies will begin producing Tamiflu between now and December. According to the Director of the Vietnam Pharmaceuticals Administration Department Cao Minh Quan, the decision was made following negotiations with Roche Pharmaceuticals. Quan estimates that Vietnam needs to stockpile 25 million doses of Tamiflu in the event of an AI pandemic. (Note: Post has not confirmed this information and doubts the likelihood that an agreement with Roche has been finalized. End Note).

EMBASSY AI MEETINGS

110. (U) The Embassy's AI Working Group met on October 26 to discuss contingency planning and response to a potential AI outbreak. Post will have a digital video conference with the U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City next week to continue AI contingency planning.

BOARDMAN